

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 2100

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, EC
SUBJECT: CEOSL FORMS POLITICAL MOVEMENT

1. ON MARCH 26 LEADERS OF THE ECUADOREAN CONFEDERATION OF FREE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS(CEOSL), MEETING IN QUITO, RESOLVED TO FORM A POLITICAL MOVEMENT, THE MOVIMIENTO ECUATORIANO DEL PUEBLO TRABAJADOR, TO SERVE AS A VEHICLE FOR THE EXPRESSION OF THE WORKERS' POLITICAL WILL IN THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS. PLANS CALL FOR THE MOVEMENT TO ENDORSE ONE OF THE PRESENT CENTER-LEFT PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES (I.E., RODRIGO BORJA, FRANCISCO HUERTA OR JAIME ROLDOS), AND LATER TO SEEK RECOGNITION AS A POLITICAL PARTY IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NEXT CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS.

2. JOSE CHAVEZ, PRESIDENT OF CEOSL AND DIRECTOR OF THE NEW MOVEMENT, TOLD POL/LABOFF MARCH 30 THAT THE CREATION OF THE NEW ORGANIZATION WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE NO EXISTING POLITICAL PARTY SATISFIES THE WORKERS' POLITICAL NEEDS. CHAVEZ EXPECTS TO TURN OVER THE FORMAL DIRECTION OF THE NEW MOVEMENT, TO A COLLEAGUE SHORTLY TO EMPHASIZE THAT CEOSL AND THE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION ARE DISCRETE UNITS. BECAUSE THE NEW MOVEMENT NEEDS OPERATING EXPENSES, CHAVEZ HOPES FOR A PRESIDENTIAL ENDORSEMENT WITHIN TWO WEEKS,
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AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE SELECTED CANDIDATE.
AT THE MOMENT, CHAVEZ IS LEANING TOWARD LIBERAL CANDIDATE FRANCISCO HUERTA.

3. COMMENT: AN ENDORSEMENT OF HUERTA (OR ROLDOS OR BORJA) WOULD PUBLICLY DEFINE CEOSL AND CHAVEZ AS PART OF ECUADOR'S DEMOCRATIC MAINSTREAM AND WEAKEN THE EFFORTS OF COMMUNISTS

AND UNTRA-RIGHTISTS LIKE THE MINISTER OF LABOR TO PORTRAY THEM AS COMMUNIST ALLIES. HOWEVER, WE EXPECT THE ATTEMPT TO CONVERT LEGALLY FROM A MOVEMENT TO A PARTY TO FAIL. CEOSL LACKS THE RESOURCES, CANDIDATES, AFFILIATES, EXPERTISE AND TIME TO SUCCESSFULLY CREATE A POLITICAL PARTY, PLUS MANY RANK AND FILE CEOSL MEMBERS ARE OPPOSED TO THE WHOLE CONCEPT AND BELIEVE CHAVEZ BULLDOZED THE IDEA THROUGH THE MEETING TO CREATE A VEHICLE FOR HIS OWN PERSONAL POLITICAL AMBITIONS. HOWEVER, THE MAINTENANCE OF CEOSL'S LEGAL STATUS MAY DEPEND ON SUCH A POLITICAL ENDORSEMENT. ON MARCH 16 MINISTER OF LABOR JORGE SALVADOR CHIRIBOGA EXPRESSED HIS VIEW TO CHARGE THAT CHAVEZ WAS LEADING CEOSL DOWN THE ROAD TO COMMUNISM AND THAT, THEREFORE, HE WAS INCLINED TO REVOKE CEOSL'S LEGAL STATUS (PERSONERIA JURIDICA). IT CAN BE HOPED THAT CEOSL'S AND CHAVEZ' PUBLIC IDENTIFICATION WITH THE MAINSTREAM WILL STAY THE MINISTER'S HAND. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT THE MINISTER'S PERSONAL ANTIPATHY TO CHAVEZ IS SO STRONG THAT THE UPCOMING POLITICAL STATEMENT WILL HVE LITTLE EFFORT ON THE GOE'S PRESENT HARD LINE AGAINST LABOR IN GENERAL AND CEOSL IN PARTICULAR.
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